

By the Congress of the United States of America. Manifesto

By the CONGRESS of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA. **MANIFESTO.**

THESE United States, having been driven to hostilities by the oppressive and tyrannous measures of Great-Britain; having been compelled to commit the essential rights of man to the decision of arms; and having been at length forced to shake off a yoke which had grown too burthensome to bear, they declared themselves free and independent.

Confiding in the justice of their cause; confiding in Him who disposes of human events, although weak and unprovided, they set the power of their enemies at defiance.

In this confidence they have continued, through the various fortune of three bloody campaigns, unawed by the power, unsubdued by the barbarity of their foes. Their virtuous citizens have born without repining, the loss of many things which make life desireable. Their brave troops have patiently endured the hardships and dangers of a situation, fruitful in both beyond former example.

The Congress, considering themselves bound to love their enemies, as children of that Being who is equally the Father of all; and desirous, since they could not prevent, at least to alleviate the calamities of war, have studied to spare those who were in arms against them, and to lighten the chains of captivity.

The conduct of those serving under the King of Great-Britain hath, with some few exceptions, been diametrically opposite. They have laid waste the open country, burned the defenceless villages, and butchered the citizens of America. Their prisons have been the slaughter-houses of her soldiers, their ships of her seamen, and the severest injuries have been aggravated by the grossest insult.

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Foiled in their vain attempt to subjugate the unconquerable spirit of freedom, they have meanly assailed the Representatives of America with bribes, with deceit and the servility of adulation. They have made a mock of humanity, by the wanton destruction of men: They have made a mock of religion, by impious appeals to God whilst in the violation of his sacred commands: They have made a mock even of reason itself, by endeavouring to prove, that the liberty and happiness of America could safely be entrusted to those who have *sold their own*, unawed by the sense of virtue or of shame.

Treated with the contempt which such conduct deserved, they have applied to individuals: They have solicited them to break the bonds of allegiance, and imbrue their souls with the blackest of crimes: But fearing that none could be found through these United States, equal to the wickedness of their purpose, to influence weak minds they have threatened more wide devastation.

While the shadow of hope remained, that our enemies could be taught by our example to respect those laws which are held sacred among civilized nations, and to comply with the dictates of a religion which they pretend in common with us to believe and to revere, they have been left to the influence of that religion, and that example. But since their incorrigible dispositions cannot be touched by kindness and compassion, it becomes our duty by other means to vindicate the rights of humanity.

We therefore, the Congress of the United States of America, **DO** solemnly declare and proclaim, That if our enemies presume to execute their threats, or persist in their present career of barbarity, we will take such exemplary vengeance as shall deter others from a like conduct. We appeal to that God who searcheth the hearts of men for the rectitude of our intentions. And in his holy presence we declare, That as we are not moved by any light and hasty suggestions of anger or revenge, so though every possible change of fortune we will adhere to this our determination.

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DONE in Congress, by unanimous consent, the Thirtieth day of October, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-eight. **HENRY LAURENS**, President. Attest. **CHARLES THOMSON**, Secretary.